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**Greenovate Awards celebrate 10 years of student innovation in Sustainability**

The Greenovate Awards are back for 2025 with more prizes, new categories and an important milestone to celebrate – ten years of inspiring young people to design practical sustainability solutions for South Africa’s built environment.

Entries are open for the prestigious competition, founded in 2015 by Growthpoint Properties in partnership with the Green Building Council South Africa (GBCSA). Since its launch, Greenovate has grown into the country’s leading platform for student sustainability innovation, giving honours and final year students the chance to see their ideas tested against real industry challenges.

**A decade of positive impact**

Greenovate was created to bridge the gap between academia and industry. At the time, students were graduating with strong technical skills but little exposure to sustainability in practice. Growthpoint and the GBCSA set out to change that, giving students access to mentorship, real projects and the opportunity to present their research to senior leaders in the property and engineering sectors.

Over the past ten years, Greenovate has done more than launch careers. It has become a recognised talent pipeline for the industry, introducing new thinking and fresh energy into the conversation about sustainability. More than R1 million in prize money has been awarded to students from over nine universities nationwide, across property, engineering and proptech streams.

Winning ideas have gone on to influence the market, with Growthpoint piloting projects such as a smart energy management system developed by student winner Julian Banks. Alumni including Wardah Peters have returned to the programme as mentors, showing how Greenovate has built a community of sustainability professionals and thought leaders.

Mentors and judges say the standard and quality of work has grown steadily. Students are bolder, more practical and increasingly fluent in ESG principles and real-world implementation. For many participants, Greenovate has been a turning point in their careers, giving them confidence to pursue roles in sustainability and the built environment.

**What’s new for 2025**

To celebrate its tenth anniversary, Greenovate has added two new awards, each worth R10,000 and sponsored by Growthpoint.

The **Sustainability in Action Award** will go to the engineering project with the best potential to be implemented within Growthpoint’s portfolio or systems. Judges will be looking for relevance to Growthpoint’s sustainability objectives, ease of implementation and measurable impact on resource efficiency, emissions reduction or operational cost savings.

The **Transformative Impact Award** will recognise the property, quantity surveying or construction project that demonstrates the strongest alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and overall ESG performance. Criteria include clear links to SDG targets, contribution to ESG indicators and measurable impact on global sustainability priorities.

These new prizes add to an already significant prize pool. The top three projects in both property and engineering will receive R40,000, R20,500 and R14,000 respectively. The competition also offers the coveted IFC prize linked to EDGE Expert Accreditation, and top students benefit from GBCSA Accredited Professional candidate courses.

**Platform for a more sustainable future**

Finalists present their projects to an expert panel of judges, and winners are announced at the Greenovate Awards gala dinner. Top teams are also invited to participate at the Innovation Stage at the annual GBCSA Convention – a career-defining opportunity to showcase their work to business leaders and influencers.

*"Reaching the ten-year mark with Greenovate is a proud moment for Growthpoint. This initiative has grown into a genuine talent pipeline for the property industry, bringing fresh thinking into how we manage and develop sustainable buildings. What excites us most is seeing student ideas translate into solutions that can be implemented in our world today. By investing in young innovators, we are investing in the future of the built environment and the resilience of our sector,”* says**Engelbert Binedell, Chief Operating Officer of** **Growthpoint Properties**.

*"Greenovate was created to give students a voice in the sustainability conversation, and ten years later it has become a powerful platform for the next generation of leaders. Every year we see young people tackling complex challenges with creativity and rigour, and that gives us real confidence in the future of green building. The competition has not only shifted student perspectives, it has also influenced the industry by embedding sustainability into education, research and professional practice,”* says**Lisa Reynolds, Chief Executive Officer of the Green Building Council South Africa**.

Greenovate has always been about more than prize money. It is about giving students the confidence and tools to see themselves as future leaders in the built environment, and about creating a platform where students, mentors and senior industry figures engage as equals in shaping a more sustainable future.

Entries for the 2025 Greenovate Awards close on 10 November 2025**.** The competition’s mentoring day is 26 November, and the judging and gala dinner take place on 27 November. The competition is open to honours and final year students in property studies, construction, quantity surveying and engineering.

Students can register and find more information at [www.greenovatecompetition.co.za/register](https://greenovatecompetition.co.za/register).

This year, as Greenovate celebrates its tenth anniversary, the call is not only to participate but to be part of the next decade of ideas, innovation and impact.

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**ABOUT GROWTHPOINT PROPERTIES:**

Growthpoint Properties (JSE: GRT) creates space to thrive with innovative and sustainable property solutions in environmentally friendly buildings while improving the social and material well-being of individuals and communities. Growthpoint is South Africa’s leading primary JSE-listed REIT. It is an international property company invested in real estate and communities in South Africa and across the African continent, Australia and Eastern Europe. Growthpoint is at the forefront of environmental innovation in the property sector in South Africa. Visit [growthpoint.co.za](http://www.growthpoint.co.za/) for more information. Connect with Growthpoint on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/Growthpoint), [X](http://www.twitter.com/Growthpoint), [LinkedIn](http://www.linkedin.com/company/growthpoint-properties-ltd) and [YouTube](http://www.youtube.com/GrowthpointBroadcast).

**ABOUT GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL SOUTH AFRICA:**

The Green Building Council South Africa (GBCSA) is a member-based organisation focused on transforming the built environment into a place where people and planet thrive. We advocate for all buildings and precincts to be designed, built, and operated in an environmentally sustainable manner. GBCSA provides green building certification and sustainability training for the built environment and all stakeholders within the built environment. GBCSA certifies buildings through the Green Star Africa rating system, which is a localised version of Green Star, as well as Net Zero and EDGE rating systems.

**ABOUT GREENOVATE:**

A Growthpoint initiative in partnership with the GBCSA, these awards are designed to develop and encourage young talent. They expose university students and proptech start-ups to key sustainability concerns within the industry while introducing the industry to up-and-coming talent. The aim of the awards is for students and entrepreneurial innovators to learn about green building and sustainability early in their careers and enter the market as advocates for green building with a passion for creating better, more sustainable cities, towns and neighbourhoods. Visit <https://www.greenovatecompetition.co.za/> to learn more.

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